



MOVING INTO AND THROUGH PRISON: IMPROVED WELLBEING THROUGH THE SPARC AND PRISON VOICEMAIL INITIATIVES

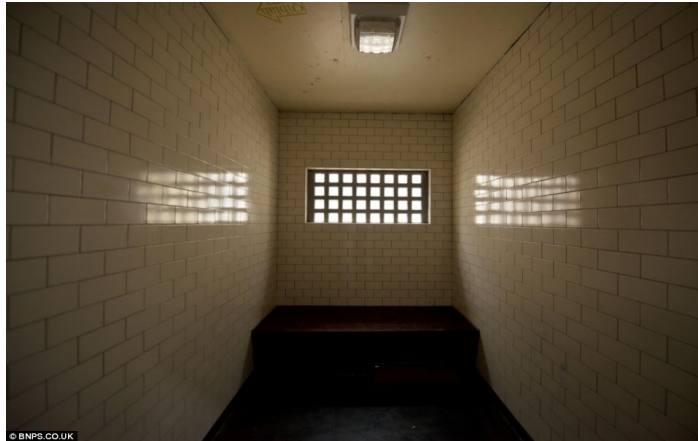
Lauren Mumby

Supervised by Todd Hogue and Amanda Roberts

ICPA, Montreal, 23rd October 2018

IMAGINE

You've been locked in a room
No belongings



How would you feel?
What would you need?



Presentation Plan

- Prison context
- 2 Innovations:
 1. SPARC
 2. Prison Voicemail
- Description and Evaluation



Prison Context



- Distress and frustration resulting from the court system (Jacobson, Hunter & Kirby, 2015)
- Offence Related Trauma (McNair, 2002)
- Heightened risk of suicide and self harm (UK Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, 2016)
- Deprivation (Sykes, 1958; Crewe, 2011)
- Family ties, accommodation, employment, finances, health (Jacobson, Edgar & Loucks, 2008).
- Better support required for vulnerable people in CJS (Bradley, 2009)
- Good family relationships must be the *Golden Thread* running through all processes of prison reform (Farmer, 2017)

Innovation 1: The SPARC Model

- Supporting People After Remand or Conviction
- Lincolnshire Action Trust Practitioners based in Court custody suites
- Support to newly sentenced or remanded prisoners while in the court cells —————> keep safe interview
- Address immediate welfare needs: referrals to prison healthcare, mental health and substance misuse teams; contact families; securing pets and properties; information sharing with the prison in relation to risk and security; provide information to prisoners and their families about regime, rules and ways to keep in touch
- Ongoing follow up support in the prison the day after arrival

SPARC Needs

Just a few examples . . .



"My children are expecting me to pick them up from school this afternoon."

"I've got the bank card and my girlfriend has no money."

"My boss doesn't know I'm in court - now I'll lose my job."

"I'm going to prison - I'll lose my flat."

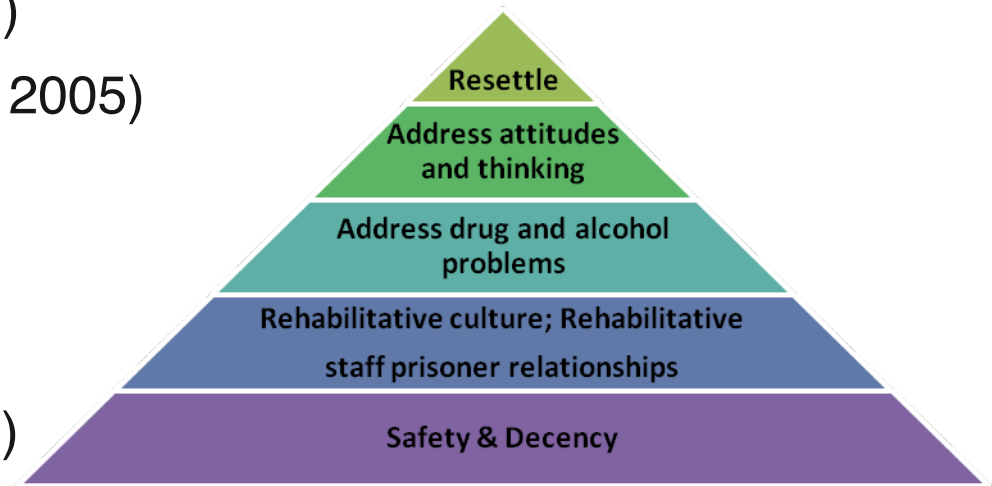
"My girlfriend was crying in court - I'm so worried about her."

"There's no-one to look after my cat."

Theoretical Background

- Wise Intervention (Walton 2014)
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Need (1943)
- Procedural Justice (Tyler, 2007)
- Good Lives Model (Ward & Stewart, 2003)
- Hope Theory (Snyder, 1995)
- Crisis Intervention (Rogers, 2005)

Miles (2015)



Theoretical background 2

- Increased wellbeing:
- Dodge et al (2012)



- Behavioural Nudges (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008)
- Individual needs approach



Case Example

DEAN



- Remanded to prison – very distressed.
- Needs identified during keep safe interview: statements of intent to commit suicide, depression, alcohol dependent, pet dog, tenancy
- Suicide and self harm alert completed in court and handed over to reception staff, urgent mental health and substance referral – mental health substance misuse nurses met him in reception; dog located and safe – arrangements made for ongoing care; liaison with Auntie to provide information and secure tenancy, attendance at ACCT reviews.
- Engagement in sentence, completion of courses and has not returned to custody

SPARC Evaluation

Part 1 – Keep Safe Interviews

- 1,302 interviews over a 2 year period
- 1035 interviews at Magistrates Court, 267 Crown
- 1093 different people (209 people were seen more than once*)
- **Needs:** 46% physical health, 43% mental health, 16% suicide and self-harm concerns, 50% substance misuse concerns, 14% learning need, 15% language needs, 27% security concerns, 54% immediate concerns
- **History:** 20% no GP, 46% no mental health support, 54% no substance misuse support, 59% substance misuse related to offending
- **Activity:** 328 physical health referrals, 491 substance misuse referrals, 443 mental health referrals, 177 suicide alerts, 295 security alerts, 175 families contacted, 31 pets secured, 14 safeguarding referrals made.



*2nd appearances excluded from needs and history data

SPARC Evaluation



Part 2 – Safer Custody Surveys

- 289 respondents, volunteers within local prison served by SPARC
- SPARC (N=71) vs Non-SPARC (N=218) no significant differences in demographics of 2 groups
- 87.3% found SPARC helpful. Helpful across all age groups, whether previous custody experiences and residential location
- SPARC clients scored significantly more positively on Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation (CORE; Evans et al, 2002) than non-SPARC
- SPARC clients scored significantly more positively on the wellbeing, functioning and problems subscales of the CORE
- Less feelings of panic, terror, despair, hopelessness, tension, anxiety and isolation; more feelings of being happy and being able to do things they needed to.

SPARC Evaluation

Part 3- Focus groups



- 11 participants across vulnerable prisoner and ‘main’ populations.
- Positive feelings e.g. reassurance, calming
- Support ‘outside the system’
- Better prepared for prison
- Support with practicalities & impact on release
- Help for families
- SPARC as a quality service (e.g. accountability and action planning)
- Immediacy and continuity



Innovation 2: Prison Voicemail



Prison Voicemail

Evaluation

- Surveys: 77 family, 81 prisoners
 - Interviews: 18 family
 - 4 areas of impact
 - health and wellbeing
 - relationships and social capital
 - resolving practicalities
 - Behaviour
- + Accessibility*

Prison Voicemail Evaluation

1. Health and Wellbeing

- 96% prisoners said PV made them feel better
- 92% prisoners said PV makes prison easier
- 97% families said PV makes them feel better
- 97% families said PV makes the sentence easier
- Relieves pains and challenges of imprisonment
- Helps prisoners feel less worried about their families and vice versa
- Provides sense of normality, removes some uncertainty, gives back control

“It helped loads . . we never been separated before, the three of us so it was a shock, it provide [sic] us with emotional support to know we can leave him messages at any time . . .it was like a little straw we could grab” (Interview 3)

Prison Voicemail Evaluation

2. Relationships and Social Capital

- 95% prisoner said they had better contact with their family due to PV
 - 83% prisoners said their relationship was better due to PV
 - 96% families said they had better contact with the person in prison
 - 93% families said their relationship with the person in prison was better.
 - Helps families maintain a sense of connection
 - Support involvement in family rituals; share family events and good news
 - Used to share positive updates between parents and children
- “They [children] leave him loads of silly messages . . . what they’ve been up to at school, what they’ve had for dinner, silly things but makes him feel like he’s watching them grow” (Interview 6)
- “Keeps him part of the family circle” (Interview 9)



Prison Voicemail Evaluation

Resolving Practicalities

- 90% prisoners said it helped them get practical issues sorted faster
- 96% families said it helped them get practical issues sorted faster
- Used to gather information for legal visits
- Used to provide consent for probation to speak with family member
- Family went on holiday for the first time due to PV

“He gave me permission to talk to his probation officer, so I was able to put a heart to save that message and then probation could listen to the message to say I’ve got permission. I said how can we do this quickly coz a letter is gonna take a few days. I was able to scroll through quickly and find the heart and she was able to listen to it there and then” (Interview 7)



Prison Voicemail Evaluation

Behaviour

- 55% of prisoners reported that using PV was likely to help stop them reoffending
- 63% of prisoners reported that using PV helped them behave better in prison

“We wanted to show by communications that life is still going on outside . . .trying to show him that life is good and its worth not getting into trouble for. In the world outside, we are still cracking on with life, these are the highlights and these are the bits you could be enjoying when you come out”

Prison Voicemail Evaluation

Accessibility

- Families valued being able to replay their messages at any time
- Can be used anywhere and is discrete
- Can be used abroad
- “Its really handy to be able to leave messages at any time of the day for him to be able to pick up. . . Its very good for if you think of something at six o'clock at lock up time you can leave a message and then he'll listen to it in the morning”



Conclusion



- SPARC is a Wise Intervention which aims to support people during their transition into custody through a series of behavioural nudges unique to each individual.
- SPARC provides an opportunity to monitor the needs of people at the specific point of entry into prison custody from court
- SPARC and PV work to decrease challenges while increasing resources
- SPARC and PV have both been shown to have a positive impact on wellbeing and resolving practicalities
- SPARC and PV encourage the maintenance of family ties and support the *Golden Thread*.
- PV is accessible; it increases wellbeing, helps support family ties, is indicated in behaviour change and helps resolve practicalities.
- Further research is required to ascertain long term impact.

QUESTIONS



Thank you

lmumby@lincoln.ac.uk

Twitter: @LaurenMumby



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN